

# University - Industry collaboration in university education: The Finnish perspective

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SMART, Third Training and Study visit  
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## Themes of the session:

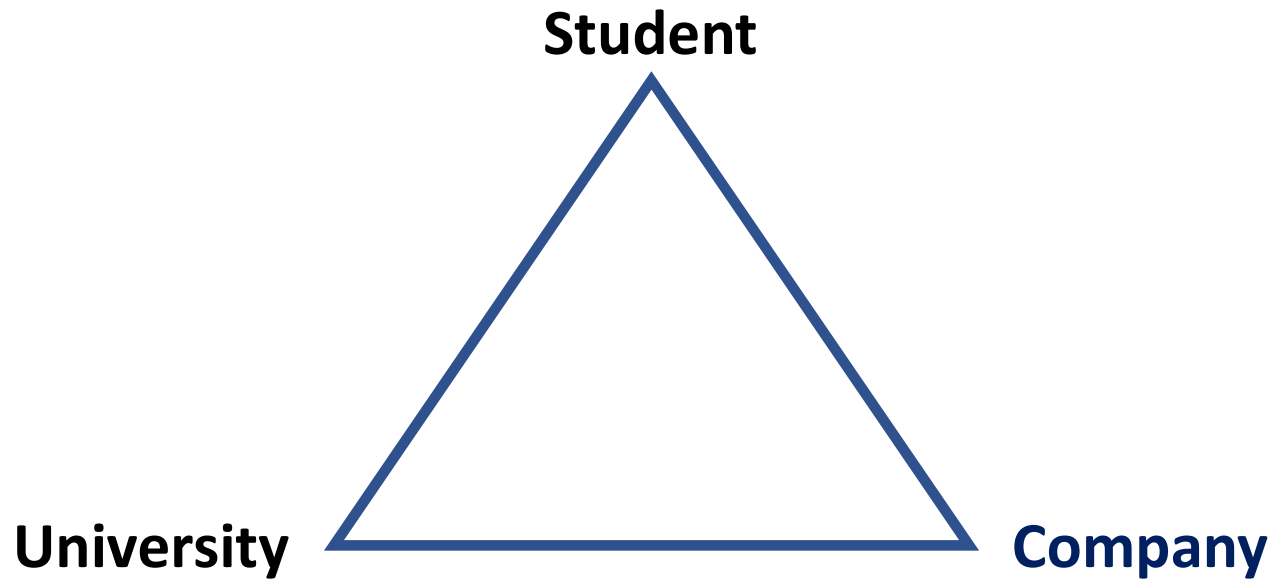
- 3 parties in university – industry collaboration
- Different forms of collaboration
- In glance: Internships and the ways to get more out of them



Archives of University of Turku



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM  
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA



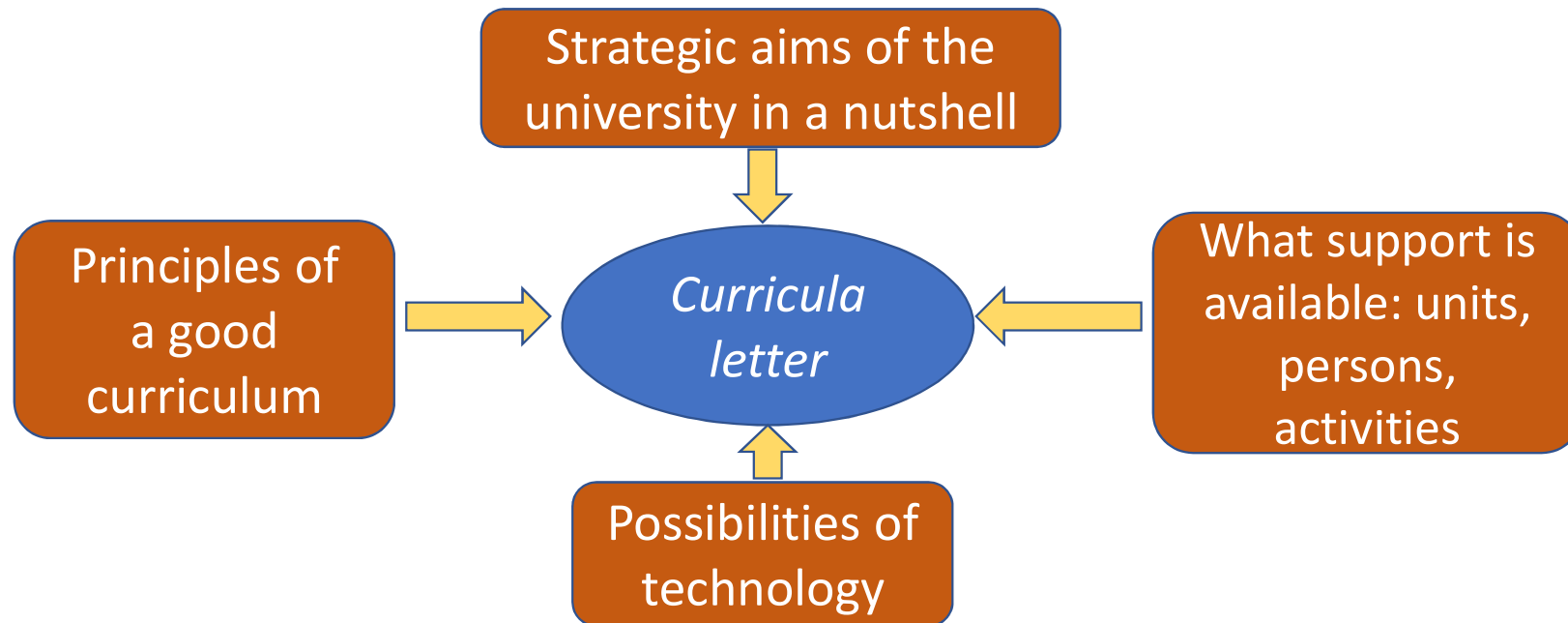
## University – industry (or “working life”) collaboration is an integrated element of the curriculum

- ⇒ It’s not an “add on”
- ⇒ How to develop it systematically



## One answer: Vice-rector's "Curricula letter" (UTU)

- Steers the curriculum work in faculties
- Bridges university strategy and curricula planning
- Collects different information in one short document (about 6 pages)



## Emphasis in this period (2022-2024) curricula planning: 5 themes

### 1. Sustainable development (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals by United Nations)

### 2. Professional life relevance

- Transferable skills needed in professional life in addition to the in-depth knowledge of the field and its methodology: E.g. problem-solving skills, critical thinking, information retrieval, analysis and application, entrepreneurial skills, and the ability to communicate and collaborate.
- These skills are described in the curriculum in a similar manner as subject competence.
- Faculties are encouraged to strengthen the professional life relevance of education both in basic and doctoral degrees by involving **professional and business life representatives in the curricula planning**. Alumni collaboration should be used in the planning of education and services.

### 3. Availability of teaching without time and place constraints

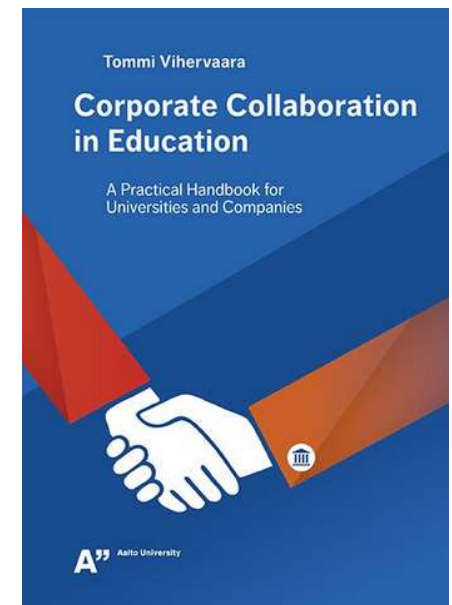
### 4. Continuous learning

### 5. Internationality in studies



## Different forms of university – industry collaboration

- Visiting lecturers: "Meet the experts"
- Study visits to companies
- Internships, work placements
- Case teaching
- Competitions: E.g. sales competition
- Study projects
- BA, MA and PhD thesis in industry setting
- Alumni collaboration: E.g. mailing lists, Get together meetings, participation in curricula planning
  - ... and many more



*Vihervaara, T. 2018. Corporate collaboration in education. A Practical Handbook for Universities and Companies.*



## Internships

- Traditional
- Often used

=> BUT: Are they systematically utilized?





# Work placement periods in university studies

Recommendations on the planning, implementation and  
reporting of internships and other work placement periods  
- For students, universities and employers



University of Oulu  
Aalto University  
University of Lapland  
Lappeenranta University of Technology  
Tampere University of Technology  
University of Turku



Leverage from  
the EU  
2014-2020





## TO DO –lists to support internships:

### Lists for

- the students,
- the degree programmes/university and
- the companies

## What to do before, during and after the internship

## Includes also the benefits for all parties

*Generated by national development project:*

<https://tylihanke.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/handouts-v5b.pdf>





A motto:

A well planned internship that has clear objectives can benefit everyone: the student, the university and the employer!



# BENEFITS OF INTERNSHIPS FOR THE UNIVERSITY AND DEGREE PROGRAMME

Students progress with their studies, also during the summer.

Reports and feedback from employers provide information on which skills are currently relevant in working life  
=> a good development tool.

Contacts with employers can also be used in other forms of cooperation at the university.



# TO DO LIST for a degree programme

## 1. Before internship

- Organising events on internship and job seeking
- Announcing internship placements
- Managing the internship and preparing forms.
- Approving the internship placement.
- Signing the internship contract.
- Checking the student's internship plan.
- Providing reporting instructions.

## 2. During the internship

- Giving feedback on assignments the student completes during the internship.
- Contact person supports the student if necessary

## 3. After the internship

- Assessing the internship report.
- Feedback to the student.
- Feedback meeting with the employer (if applicable).
- Approving the internship, granting and recording study credits.
- Using the internship reports to develop education within the degree programme, share experiences among students and compile statistics on internship placements.



## BENEFITS FOR THE STUDENT

Experiences of success!

Improving competencies.

Understanding skills that are needed in working life.

Theory into practice, better understanding of the content of studies and their importance for future careers, improved motivation.

Employment prospects improve.

Study credits also during the summer.

The student learns more about the local employers in his or her field of study.



## TO DO –LIST FOR A STUDENT

### Before internship

- Recording the internship in the personal study plan.
- Expressing one's own competencies (personal study plan -> CV)
- Applying for internship.
- Approval for internship placement.
- Signing the internship/employment contract.
- Applying for internship support (where applicable).
- Preparing an internship plan and setting personal learning outcomes.

### During the internship

- Reflecting one's own competencies and skills development (e.g. in a blog or skills profile).
- Discussing one's tasks and job description in relation to employer's operations at large.
- Getting the most out of internship – being active, interested, curious and open towards new things and learning.
- Reviewing one's own career plans in relation to the internship and the opportunities available in the field.

### After the internship

- Writing an internship report and reflecting on the experience.
  - Achievement of the learning outcomes
  - Analysing one's own professional growth
  - Recognising one's own areas of improvement
- Having the internship approved.
- Updating one's CV and skills profile.
- Updating the personal study plan.
- Sharing experiences with other students.

## BENEFITS FOR THE EMPLOYER/COMPANY

Chance to recruit talented and motivated students  
→ the workforce of the future.

Tapping into the latest research-based knowledge in the field.

Getting a fresh perspective on the company's/organisation's  
operations and new development ideas.

Gaining real-time insight into the skills and competencies of  
students.

Opportunity to let the university know which skills  
are needed in the field.





### Before the internship

- Announcing internship placements.
- Signing the internship/employment contract.
- Appointing a person responsible for the internship.
- Planning the tasks of the intern.
- Appointing the supervisor.

### After the internship

- Issuing a reference (job description, including both specific tasks and overall working life skills).
- Feedback from the employer to the student and the degree programme: how was the internship from the employer's perspective

### During the internship

- Taking the student as a member of a working community.
- Supervision:
  - Guiding in the actual work tasks
  - Reviewing the objectives of the internship
  - Easy to reach for the student
  - Discussing with the student

## A big question caused by the pandemic:

Internships at the distance?



Sales competitions: A current example from Indonesia: <https://seasalescompetition.com/>



The screenshot shows the homepage of the SEASAC 2022 website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, About Us, SEASAC, ESC, TNSC, Activities and Results, News, Join Us, and Get In Touch. A search icon is also present. The main banner features the SEASAC logo, the text "3<sup>RD</sup> SEASAC 2022 SOUTH-EAST ASIAN SALES COMPETITION", and the tagline "Developing the Next Generation of Sales Graduates". It also states "Organized by: BINUS UNIVERSITY" and provides the dates for the "QUALIFYING ROUND : 13-15 SEPTEMBER 2022" and "SEMI-FINALS AND FINALS : 12-13 OCTOBER 2022". A "More Info..." button is visible. Below the banner, there are two sections: "About" and "Time and Place". The "About" section describes SEASAC as an outcome of cooperation between universities and government agencies in South-East Asia and European universities, founded by a European Community Erasmus+ project. The "Time and Place" section states that SEASAC 2022 is the foremost sales competition in Asia and encourages users to explore the website and watch videos on the YouTube Channel. At the bottom, there is a row of logos for participating institutions: ITS (Institut Teknologi Sepuluh Nopember), Institut Teknologi Kalimantan, Universitas Mataram, Universitas Padjadjaran, Universitas Semarang, Universitas Sam Ratulangi, Universitas Udayana, AGORA INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF TURKU, and ALMA MATER STUDIUM UNIVERSITA DI BOLOGNA.

## To conclude:

1. There are many possibilities for university – industry collaboration
2. It's a win – win situation for all parties of the triangle: Benefits for
  - Universities/Departments/Teachers
  - Companies/Employers
  - Students
3. A question to ponder: Which are the possibilities (easily...) to intensify the existing practices
4. What kind of support the university could offer for all parties of the triangle



## References

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Vihervaara, T. 2018. Corporate collaboration in education. A Practical Handbook for Universities and Companies. Aalto University.





*Kiitos!*

*Thank you!*

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